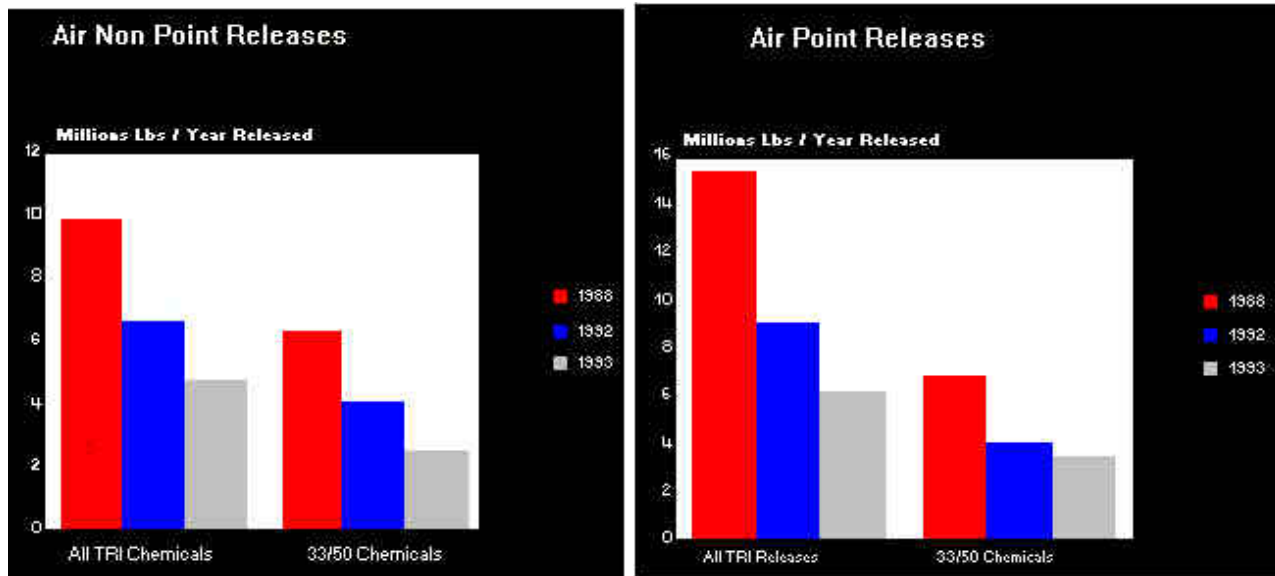


COMMUNITY BASED ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Gateway Initiative in greater East St. Louis, Illinois exemplifies how EPA can achieve environmental improvements through direct involvement with communities. East St. Louis is a highly industrialized area that has historically suffered from poor air quality and a variety of public works problems (e.g., broken sewer mains). Under the Gateway Initiative, EPA has coordinated the efforts of a variety of stakeholders to address these problems; key stakeholders include the Illinois EPA, the University of Illinois, the Illinois Department of Public Health and community groups. These organizations have worked together to inform the community of ongoing environmental initiatives and progress and to solicit input on future initiatives. For example, the program has employed "good neighbor dialogues" to inform residents of progress in reducing releases of TRI chemicals. These chemicals have shown a marked decrease between 1988 and 1993. The effect of these reductions can be seen on a grassroots level: local hospital staff contend that the elimination of chemical spills at Monsanto and other industrial facilities has resulted in hundreds fewer emergency room admissions.



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